

Chatty Stock Letter from Chicago.

(BY OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

Top prices for different grades of live stock, with comparisons:—

CATTLE.	1896.	1895.	1894.	1893.
1500 lbs. up.....	\$ 4 75	\$ 6 20	\$ 4 65	\$ 6 00
1350 @ 1500.....	4 35	6 20	4 60	6 00
1200 @ 1350.....	4 35	6 10	4 45	5 80
1050 @ 1200.....	4 40	5 75	4 30	5 60
900 @ 1050.....	4 10	5 60	3 95	5 50
Stks. and F.....	3 85	4 65	4 00	4 80
Fat cows.....	4 00	5 30	3 90	4 75
Canners.....	2 25	2 50	2 45	3 00
Bulls.....	3 50	4 75	3 75	4 50
Calves.....	4 65	5 25	4 65	6 50
Texas steers.....	4 10	4 75	3 90	5 15
Texas C. & B.....	2 90	4 40	2 70	3 75
Hogs.....				
Mixed.....	3 85	5 00	5 00	7 80
Heavy.....	3 75	5 10	5 45	7 80
Light.....	3 95	4 95	5 40	7 80
Pigs.....	3 95	4 75	5 30	7 55
SHEEP.....				
Natives.....	3 65	5 00	4 60	6 25
Western.....	3 85	4 60	4 75	6 45
Texas.....	3 40	3 75	3 25	5 60
Lambs.....	4 60	5 75	4 85	7 55

The cattle market is the lowest on record for good imported heavy cattle. When train loads of good, thick, fat export cattle can be made up at about \$3.75, it looks as if cattle were getting pretty nearly to the "dirt cheap" point. With all kinds of cattle—feeders, fat cows, heifers, export steers—selling so near together, it looks as if heavy beefs had struck bottom. At the same time the distillery cattle will soon be coming, then summer-fed cattle will follow and then Northern range cattle will come along in the procession.

Choice cattle, hogs and sheep are selling pretty close together at \$3.50 to \$3.75. The course of hog prices is downward, and dealers begin to think the summer supplies are bound to be large.

Average prices in May for good beef cattle have been a fraction higher than April prices during the past eighteen years, and there is some chance that values will appreciate in the fifth month this year.

April 22nd, 1896, stands on record as the lowest point reached for choice fat cattle. The extreme top was \$4.10, with choice 1,500-lb. cattle at \$3.75. The highest point on record in the past quarter of a century was June, 1882, when fancy cattle sold up to \$9.30 per 100 lbs. in Chicago.

Thousands of fat, corn-fed cattle are being turned out upon grass now to take chances on a better market.

Hog prices are the lowest—barring February, 1891—since 1879. The average price in April will be about \$3.50, being \$1.50 per 100 lbs. lower than in April, 1895 and 1894. The prospects for hog prices mending are not very bright; there are too many pigs and too much corn in the community. The hogs coming to market are very good and heavy. Many carloads of hogs in single droves average as much as 400 lbs. to 500 lbs. each.

The April average price for good sheep this year is about \$3.40, against \$4.25 last year, \$3.65 in '94, \$3.25 in '93, \$5.75 in '92, and \$5.05 for a series of 18 years. Thus, it will be seen that sheep prices are extremely low, and yet feed is so low that feeders are still able to make a little money.

Several hundred Colorado lambs averaging 78 lbs. to 79 lbs. sold at \$4.45, and 217 head, 82 lbs., at \$4.50 per 100 lbs.

A Colorado cattleman expressed the opinion that the light shipment of cattle from that State was due to home consumption, which has not been so large in ten years.

Montreal Markets.

Cattle.—This market has been more or less "jumpy" for a number of days back—now up, now down; the difference in price, however, never varying beyond a ½¢ per lb. either way. The receipts have been rather heavy for local use, and not being helped out by any demand from exporters, gives the butcher rather the better of the drover. A few cattle on each market might be picked up that would be suitable for export, but they are only an odd one, and not prime at that. The opening of navigation this week will tend to help local markets a little in the way of preventing stagnation, at present cattle being carried over from market to market. The pick of the choicest cattle offered can now be had for 3½¢ per lb.; a very good, straight and not too heavy class readily making from 3½¢ to 3¾¢ per lb.; common to medium lots ranging from 2½¢ to 3¢ per lb. The receipts run about 1,000 per week.

Sheep and Lambs.—What few sheep are offered find a ready trade at from 3½¢ to 4½¢ per lb., and even a shade higher for anything very choice, the outside figure being for yearling lambs. Spring lambs are not very abundant, and are still selling high, though gradually coming down. They range from \$2.50 to \$1.50 each, according to size.

Calves.—Receipts are heavy, 1,000 to 1,500 per week being brought into the market. The bulk of them are rather poor in quality. Prices range from about \$2 to \$10 each, although numbers are sold below this range and occasionally above it, but the latter is for anything very nice.

Live Hogs.—The past week's local market has been a fairly strong one, due to the shorter supplies; but little change has been made in contracts from Western shippers. A lot of 300 mixed packers at the Montreal Stock Yards on Monday changed hands at \$4.25 per cwt.—rather a stiff figure. Since last writing, the last lot of dressed hogs—some seven cars that have been held in storage—have been cleaned up at \$1.50 per cwt. (The shipper will lose about 50¢ per cwt. on this transaction.)

Hides and Skins.—Consequently three weeks running this market has experienced a decline: the first of ½¢ per lb. to 5½¢, then to 5¢, and again a further decline of 1¢ per lb. to 4¢. For No. 1—quotations now being for both light and heavy grades: for Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4¢, 3¢, and 2¢ per lb. Sheep and calf skins unchanged; the former from 75¢ to 90¢ each, and the latter, 6¢ for No. 1 and 4¢ for No. 2. Lamb skins 10¢ each.

The British Markets.—Since our last report a slight reaction has taken place in these markets, but only at a sacrifice in the way of a forced clearance, which has had a beneficial effect on the market all round. The receipts of Argentine and American cattle continue heavier than the demand calls for, and until there is a let-up in shipments not much improvement can be expected. Best States cattle are quoted at 10¢, and in some cases for very fancy a shade better; sheep 12¢ per lb.; in both cases sinking the offer. Ocean cattle space is abundant to Liverpool and London, a number of steamers booked to sail first week in May not yet being all let. This is entirely due to the fact that shippers cannot afford to pay the price farmers are asking for their cattle, under the existing condition of the British markets; consequently little has been done along this line. Rates are quoted at 40 shillings per head, but unless more cattle are forthcoming this will be dropped somewhat. Hay remains unchanged.

Provisions.—Tallow in Liverpool was 3d. lower, and light bacon 6d. Pork closed 50s.; lard, 2½s.; bacon, 25s. 6d. to 26s.; and tallow, 19s.

Horse Market.

About 200 head were disposed of at Grand's Repository during the last two days of the Horse Show in Toronto. The following well-known breeders are among the consignors: Messrs. M. H. Cochrane, Hillhurst, Que.; H. N. Crossley, Roseau, Ont.; Quinn Bros., Brampton, Ont.; H. Cargill & Son,

Cargill, Ont.; J. D. Graham & Co., Toronto; and J. Silver, Newmarket.

Most of the horses sold were bought for Glasgow and London markets, and several of the horsemen present stated that there promised to be a great demand for export as soon as the route by Montreal was opened for the season. All space is contracted for on the first four steamships. A very large consignment will be made by Mr. C. Flannigan, of Toronto.

APIARY.

Transferring the Colony.

If colonies have been purchased in box hives, they should be transferred to the frame hive as soon as a seasonable opportunity presents itself.



Fig. I.—Driving the Bees from the Box to the Frame Hive.

Early in the season it is not a difficult matter to drive bees from their combs, cut out the latter and fit them into their frames. If the combs thus fitted in are temporarily held in place in the frames, the bees, under whose care they should be placed at once, will fasten them securely in a few hours or days at most. Fig. I. shows the method of procedure. Towards the middle of a pleasant day, about the end of April or 1st of May, blow smoke into the hive to be transferred, and after the bees have been given a few minutes to fill up with honey, invert the hive and place over the open end the frame hive. By rapping continuously for some minutes on the hive, the bees will be impelled to leave it and cluster in the upper box. The hive thus vacated may then be taken into a closed room and one side pried off, to facilitate the removal of the combs. The box containing the bees is to be placed meanwhile on the spot originally occupied by the box hive, the bees being allowed to go in and out without restraint, only two precautions being necessary, namely, to shade the box well and provide for ventilation by propping it up from the bottom and leaving also a slight opening at the top.

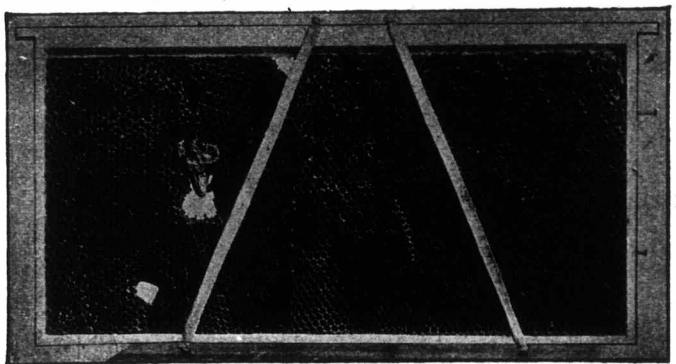


Fig. II.—Transferred Comb.

In filling the frames with combs, cut from a box hive the largest and straightest sheets having the most sealed worker brood in them, and so cut that the frame will fit over them snugly, taking pains so far as possible to have the comb placed in the frame in the same position as it was built. The comb, if not heavy, can be held in place temporarily by slender wire nails, pushed through holes punched in the side and top bars. In many instances the comb when pressed into the frame will seem so firm as not to need nails or sticks, but in the heat of the hive, and with the weight of the bees that will cluster on it to repair the cut edges and fasten them to the bars, unsupported combs are very apt to give way, creating disastrous confusion. Thus the strips as shown at Fig. II. should always be used.—Frank Benton, M.S., in *Honey Bee Manual* issued by the U. S. Dept of Agriculture.

Nothing is better for a stallion during the stud season than good clean oats—plenty of them—and the best of timothy hay one year old. A hot bran mash should be given once a week—on Saturday night if your horse is to be idle until Monday. A handful of Glauber's salts dissolved and fed with the mash once in two weeks will be found beneficial in keeping the blood cool. This treatment should be followed until you can cut fresh grass. You may then substitute grass for the bran and oats. Too much grass must not be given; a little two or three times a week will do the horse good.



A BICYCLE THIEF.

BY LUKE SHARP.

A certain news agency has telegraphed abroad the report that I am in Switzerland, not for the benefit of my health, but for the purpose of stealing bicycles, and they added that I was an expert thief, and, for a time at least, I had succeeded in baffling the most praiseworthy attempts of the police of two towns to capture me.

While this statement is naturally flattering to me, it is nevertheless a libel, and, in fact, if I cared to use strong language, I might go as far as to take the last syllable away from the word "libel."

The whole trouble arose through Switzerland not having a proper language of its own, that hilly country preferring to express what few thoughts it has in a mixture of French, German, and Italian, depending on what particular canton you happen to be in. They say that the Swiss are natural linguists. Unfortunately they are. Any combination of sounds you may make means something to any Swiss to whom you happen to be talking, for he knows so many languages that you are sure to hit one of them, and so you convey ideas to him that you had no thought of expressing.

October weather is lively in Switzerland. Most of the visitors have then gone, prices come down one-half, and the air is sweet and cool, with usually a cloudless sky.

Under these circumstances, I thought it would be a nice thing, as the roads were good and the scenery picturesque, to take a bicycle tour right around Lake Thun, beginning at the town which gives the lake its name, going around the north side of the lake to Interlaken, and returning by the south shore.

The hotel-keeper told me that if I went up the street, turned to the right, went under an arcade until I came to a tunnel, penetrated that and emerged on another street, turned to the left and kept on I would come to the shop of a man who would let me have a bicycle on hire by the day or the hour. I followed the directions as closely as possible, and thought I recognized the shop because a bicycle was leaning against the wall. The owner was leaning against the doorway, looking at the bicycle outside. The following conversation in many languages took place between us:

Haben sie un bicyclette a louer? I opened on him with the above impartial mixture of German and French. It seems he understood me to ask if that was his bicycle, whereupon he replied in four languages:

"Yaw, yaw, oui, yes, so."

"Then, throwing in a bit of Italian, I led off with:

"Quanta costa la machine a la hoar, oder per tag?"
Now, I submit, that to any educated person, or even to a university man, this sentence said as plainly as print, "How much do you want for this machine by the hour or day?" I tried afterward to get the magistrate to see this, but he, not knowing Italian, shied at the very beginning of the phrase. The owner of the bicycle on oath declares that he thought I asked how much the bicycle had cost him. He says that he answered he paid 500 francs for that brute of a machine, made in France, while I understood him to agree to let me have it for five francs a day, which was cheap. I was in a hurry to be off and was afraid he might repent his offer, so I said it was all right, and I would take it, whereupon, without further parley, I wheeled the bicycle into the middle of the road, sprang on its back and was off, leaving the astonished man standing by his door, too thunderstruck, it seems, to make any reply. I had passed beyond his sight at the first turning of the road.

I pedaled serenely on, little realizing what a commotion I had left behind me, and the one funny thing about this most regrettable episode is that I spent an exceedingly quiet, peaceful and enjoyable day, not knowing I was pursued, making no attempt to elude anybody and yet eluding them in what appeared afterward to be by subtle and crafty devices. The magistrate could not be persuaded that my sitting on the veranda of a restaurant in the main street of Interlaken, with the bicycle in plain view of everybody, was not the brazen act of a hardened criminal, who knew the police would be searching for him in the back streets.

When the man standing against the doorway had recovered partly from his amazement at my sudden flight on his machine, he rushed to the police station and told the authorities there a plausible foreigner had engaged him in polite Ollendorian conversation, and, while his mind was distracted in trying to follow his remarks, had seized the opportunity and also the machine and was at that moment making his way to the north road toward Interlaken.

Now, capture under these circumstances seemed to be deliciously easy. There were no branching-off roads. The mountains were on one side and the lake on the other, on neither side of which was bicycling practicable. Therefore, all the two policemen had to do when they mounted their machines was to ride faster than I did and so overtake me. As I had no idea that a race was on, I plunged along in a leisurely manner and would undoubtedly have been taken near Interlaken if it had not been for the fact that some years ago a company built a funicular railway from the margin of the lake a mile or so up to St. Beatenburg. I had lived in St. Beatenburg once, and I remembered that the road from there to Interlaken was a good one, so I thought that perhaps it would not be a bad plan to go up on the railway and coast down to Interlaken. I knew a man who had done it once. I can well believe now that no one ever tries it the second time. The car goes up to St. Beatenburg three or four times a day only, but when a couple of miles away from the landing I saw a steamer coming in, and I knew if I reached the landing about the time she did I would get a car.

I am not a racer, but I thereupon put in my best ticks to make connection with the mountain railway. The road at this point is as level as the lake itself and only a few feet above it. My thoughts turned to the railway because I knew that beyond the lower end of it the carriage road rose high above the lake, passed through several tunnels, and then went down to the Interlaken plain. By taking the upcar I would avoid all this and have it down hill all the way. The policemen, it seems, caught sight of me as I was making my spurt, and they at once put on extra steam, but there is a deep bay just before one reaches the funicular, and they lost sight of me as I turned the point. I had reached the top of the railway funicular, and I bicycled the mile or more along the street, high up above the lake, on one side of which is scattered the village of St. Beatenburg, with its wonderful view of the snow mountains—the Jungfrau, the Eiger, the Monch, and a host of others.

I found the ride down the zigzag road not such fun as I had expected. I saw the brake was not going to last if I kept on, so I had to walk most of the way down. Coming to a more level ground, I cycled gently into Interlaken, making for the place where they sell Munich beer, and there, over a mug and a sandwich, on the main street, I made my frugal lunch, with the bicycle standing against the pillar of the veranda.

After a smoke I proceeded out of Interlaken, and took the south road that borders the lake. This road is not so good for cycling as the other, being much more hilly, while the road-bed is more stony. I therefore walked a good deal, taking it very leisurely, and in course of time I was overtaken by a